

* 782 /163 cont. /

774 the Miao, but its origin cannot be traced.

At the sacrifice a low square table is set up in a vacant area outside the main entrance, and on it are placed three bowls each of wine and meat. Each bowl of meat has a pair of chopsticks on it. Also a bowl of water with salt and pepper /la-tzu/ in it. Still another bowl has a small quantity of uncooked rice, as horse fodder. Three packs of paper money are piled up one on the other, with three sticks of incense stuck in among the paper money. Before the table is a low chair, on which is a handkerchief.

787 /164/ The sorcerer-priest wearing everyday clothes and holding a pair of chiao-tzu in his right hand, utters incantation. First he recites the invocation, after which he scatters some rice around. Each time he makes an incantation, some rice is scattered. After repeating this act three times, he starts divination with the chiao-tzu to find out whether the shen has arrived. If he gets the sheng chiao, then the shen has already descended. Then he starts an incantation to urge the spirit to drink wine. Then he states the reason for the invocation, and prays seeking the protection of the shen. After this he utters the incantation to send off the shen three times, each time scattering rice. At the same time the bystanders burn the paper.

(5) The Kung-an Shen

774 The Kung-an shen, also known as the Shen of the five
751 wisdoms, gives protection against many things: such as pustules
231 and ulcers, flood and fire, the six domestic animals not in-
243 creasing, and the five grains not being fruitful. For all these
731 they may sacrifice to this shen. But there are many grades of
sacrifice to this shen, the first grade, the third grade, the fifth
grade, the seventh grade, the ninth grade, and the twelfth
grade, which must be performed in rotation. For instance, when
a family offers sacrifice the first time, they offer the first-grade
sacrifice, and if after three or five years it offers a sacrifice, it

/198 cont./

752 or the healing will be ineffective." The magic formula for
 755 water is as follows: "On the other side of the mountain press
 789 down the mountain; on the other side of the water press down
 the water; draw /i.e. delineate/ the burden of the kuei, chop
 off the kuei mountain. The old dragon has personally come to
 the dragon-deep rapids. Li Lao-ko of Mu-shan has been in-
 vited, and without fear of miscellaneous kuei or distant ones,
 the left hand draws the thunder of heaven, the right hand draws
 the thunder of the earth, drawing altogether 500 savage thunders."

(5) Tan-hsileh shui /"carrying-blood water"/: This is
 used to heal an injured person whose blood keeps flowing. First
 ordering the man to take hold of the injured place, he utters
 an incantation and sprays a mouthful of water, and thus the
 bleeding will stop. The magic formula for the water is as
 follows: "Moving a foot, calling out once, I got Master Wu
 Hwa-hsing. Across the mountain I call out for the three stars;
 across the water I call out for shui-i /literally, "water mean-
 ing"/. The large army knife is carried to Ta-hung-sha /lit.
 "large great sands"/; the small army knife is carried to Hsiaò
 /"small"/-hung-sha. The water of the Yangtze River and the
 current from the sea are carried. The foot stamps on the
 dragon's head, and the blood carried does not flow; the foot is
 set on the dragon's waist, and the blood carried does not seep
 out. Boys, boys, changed in the muddy fields. The boys are
 related. The master asks me to mark off the four places.
 The disciple asks me to point in the four directions."

(6) Feng-tao-k'ou shui /"closing-a-knife-wound water"/:
 Heals knife wounds. After this incantation is uttered three
 times, not only does the wound close, but the fingers become
 • [75] immune to knife cuts. The magic formula is: "When the sun
 comes up it is a drop of red; the hand wields a golden whip to
 ride the dragon; a swallow of water stops the flow of the Yangtze
 River; the disciple presses the pulse, and the blood stops flow-
 ing."

either by letting his eye rest upon them or by merely wishing them evil. Their only proof of this was that their children or wives had been taken ill after this supposed wizard had passed by their doors, or had been seen by them in the fields or on the hills. No words of the missionary could persuade those men that possibly they were mistaken. 754

This power of spitefully "overlooking" people belongs to women as well as to men. In one village typhoid broke out and took off a large number of victims. This is the blackest of all demons; it works havoc amongst the Miao, who fear it intensely. Hamlets and villages are frequently decimated by it. In one epidemic, out of a family of nine, seven had died of it. The ninth, a young wife, was so afraid that she ran away, no one knowing whither she had gone. An eighth member of the family had got over the typhoid and was being tended by this wife, but after she had absconded no one would enter the house. Thus, being bereft of all nursing and food, the patient eventually died from sheer starvation. In another instance the father, mother and two children all died; no one would enter the house to bury the bodies, so by degrees the village dogs devoured them. Perhaps the saddest case was that of a mother dying and leaving a young babe. As every one was afraid of infection the living babe was buried with the deceased mother. In this village, after several people had died of this dread disease, it began to be whispered that the sickness had been caused by an old widow woman, who 751
758

751 thereupon became suspect of being a witch.
 758 Finally feelings ran so high that some of the men, armed with staves, entered the woman's house and literally beat her to death.

754 Men who practise the "black art" sometimes come to a bad end. One wizard, who had been accused several times of "overlooking" people, was rather proud that it should be thought he possessed this power. One day the brother of a man of some influence was taken ill, and within a short while he died, killed, it was believed, by a secret arrow released by this wizard. The elder brother was so infuriated that on the day of the burial he had the wizard brought to the village, beaten with bludgeons until he lost consciousness, carried to a newly dug grave and unceremoniously flung into it. On top of the unconscious but living wizard was lowered the coffin containing his supposed unfortunate victim, and the grave was filled up.

566 Another aspect of Miao life which needs our understanding and sympathy, is the dominance of the landlords, called for the most part "*t'u-mub*". The words "*t'u-mub*" are the Chinese for "earth's eyes" and are probably used to designate the enfeoffed eldest sons of aforetime Nosu chiefs. While some Miao are the tenants of small landowners, either Chinese or Nosu, a majority till the land of *t'u-mub*, who, as a class, are crafty, corrupt, capricious and at times inhumanly cruel. Before the Chinese Republic was founded in 1911, these *t'u-mub* had immense power; and though

769 the family must buy a buffalo way ahead of the date so that it can grow fat for the occasion. On the vacant ground outside the village a small straw pavilion is erected as the altar of sacrifice. The offspring of the deceased would lead the buffalo to the altar, and waving a large butcher's knife, shout several times: "Let no one rob our buffalo!" Inside the pavilion, incense and candles are lit and placed alongside such sacrificial items as chicken and duck. Standing beside the straw pavilion, the Kwei-shih would pray to the dead: "Your descendants so-and-so send you a buffalo and wish you would watch over them always." The man then brings the butcher's knife upon the buffalo's head. If the animal is killed with one stroke, then the greatest luck would attend the household. The head of the buffalo is placed in the pavilion as a sacrifice and the beef is cooked in a huge cauldron. Those friends and relations, who have come with five measures of rice and one jar of wine as gifts, now partake of the feast. After it is over, each one carries home three pieces of beef on a pointed bamboo stick.

751 (9) Hong Ma and Hong Pa. In the Miao-I
847 village one often sees abandoned butchered children lying around. The heads and legs of these dead children are severed with a kitchen knife by their own parents, the same knife thrown beside the body with blood strewn all over, - the whole presenting a gruesome spectacle. This happened because the dead child's parents had brought to this world several sons who had died of the same illness, and so they believed that an evil spirit must have possessed them and been reborn several times to "hong ma and hong pa" (to deceive the parents). Therefore, this child is now decapitated and slaughtered so that the headless and limbless spirit of vengeance would not be able to come to

the womb again. After this any child born is sure to grow into manhood. The decapitation and butchering have to be done before the child breathes his last. When the parents perceive that the illness of the child is identical to that of the other deceased children, /92/ they expect him to die, and taking advantage of his still being alive they cut off his head and legs. 'Otherwise, they believe, the prevention would not be effective. It is said that some ignorant Chinese in the same locality also follow this custom. 75/• 847

(10) Hair Preservation. When a child of the Miao-I is born the parents invariably ask a fortune-teller to outline his life's destiny. If his destiny is not good, then his hair is allowed to grow until he is six or twelve years old when he has his first haircut. The long unshaved hair is said to help preserve the life of the child. The first haircut is an occasion for great celebration: every household in the village would hang out red and green festoons and send greetings to the parents, who in turn would give a party, killing chicken and pig for a great feast. 787 852 856

(11) The Small Horse Image. If a child among the Ch'ing Miao cries all night without stop, the parents would attribute the cause of the trouble to the passing by of the "sky horse", a colloquial name for the locust. They would hang on the door a straw-wrapped bowl filled with rice and water, and little images of horses cut from the bark of a tree. This would stop the cry of the child. 755 753

(12) Throwing Water and Rice. When a Miao-I first becomes ill, the general assumption is that he has run into some starving ghost. The family immediately burns a bunch of unhusked rice and lights incense and candles in a bowl of rice immersed in water. This bowl is carried

There are many lucky and unlucky omens. It is unlucky for a hen to crow like a rooster, for a large old snake to enter one's house, for a cat or pig belonging to another family to enter one's home, for a bird flying above to drop its offal on one's head. It is lucky for a neighbor's dog to enter one's home. If a person sees an old snake have a passage, he will certainly die. If one sees a rainbow's shadow drinking water (it is believed that when a rainbow appears, it is drinking water) he must not go there and drink that water, or he will become ill. If a dog howls in a mournful way, it is unlucky, for somebody is going to die. There are many more such beliefs.

Charms are few, yet they are considered useful. Seven wooden swords are sometimes tied together, marked in parallel lines with charcoal and hung up above the front door or on the ends of wooden beams on the roof of the house to protect it from demons. A nest of hornets or wasps is sometimes hung up above the front door or on a bed. A demon stops to count the cells, which delays him until daylight when the crow of the cock frightens him away—for the crow of a cock frightens away demons. A charm written on paper by a Chinese priest is sometimes used. A neolithic or smooth stone axe may be used as a charm. Sometimes the *tuan kung* takes a piece of paper and strikes it with his fist or with a stone (neolithic) axe, after which it is a charm.

Among the Chinese the *yin yang* 陰陽 and the *fêng shui* 風水 are superhuman potencies, corresponding to the mana and the wakanda conceptions among more primitive groups. This superhuman potency is assumed rather than theorized upon by the Ch'uan Miao. It is possessed by god-like creatures such as Ntse, ㄋㄟ ㄙㄞ, the dragon king, the sky demon, the demon that can step to the sky, the warty toad, etc., and by such persons as the *tuan kung*, the mo, the bo ntso, and by the demon drum, charms, incantations, the ceremonial crossbow, the *lin p'ai* 令牌, the sword, the seal, etc. The legends indicate that such power was possessed by some fans with which it was possible to fan a person up on a cliff, by feathers which could quickly warm a person or a stroke of which might cut off his head, etc.

To the Ch'uan Miao all inanimate things are thought to be sensitive and alive. The sun, the moon, the stars, rivers, mountains, rocks, trees, thunder, the echo, the rainbow, homes, fields, plains, recompense or *yin kuo* 因果 beds, marriage, swords, the harvest crop, the year, the *liu shêng* 六笙, and the sound of the ceremonial drum—all these and many other things are considered to be living things. There is much evidence of this in the legends and it is confirmed by the Ch'uan Miao themselves.

[26 cont.]

000 time [about April 5th] would be quite enough.

766 Hê Miao who die of leprosy are cremated. The dead body
164 is carried to a vacant lot to be placed on a pile of firewood and
757 burned before the public. It is probably for the same purpose
of avoiding contagion that the Hê Miao at Yung-chiang who die
of small pox are cremated -- a sanitary idea derived from ex-
periences.

5. Religious Beliefs

774 The Short-skirt Hê Miao apparently believe in animism.
776 In their view every object in nature is invested with a spirit.
The sky, earth, sun and moon are all nature spirits, but even
rocks, rivers, bridges, trees and wells are also endowed with
spiritual powers. The duties and responsibilities of these spirits,
however, are not quite divided, and therefore in case of sick-
ness, engagement and the acquisition of sons they would go to
one of these objects to offer prayers, and if their prayers are
fulfilled they would have to offer sacrifices. There are two kinds
of spirits: the good spirits, efficacious and powerful, who guard
over the welfare of the mortals, but in case of offences against
them, can also inflict severe punishments; the bad spirits or
ghosts, who are bent on doing harm and whom one has to sup-
press if one cannot put up with them. The first category of
spirits includes the Jade Emperor, the Guarding Buddha, one's
ancestors, the King of Hades, the Earth God, the God of Wealth,
the Bodhisattva of Mercy, Yo Fei [warrior hero of the 12th
century], Shen-nung [Divine Husbandman, a mythical emperor
of pre-historical times], Kwan-ti [warrior hero of the 3rd cen-
tury, sometimes called the God of War], tree spirits, cliff
spirits, bridge spirits, the Sun God, the Moon Goddess, the
winnowing-fan spirits, and the Lady Buddhas. The second
category includes the spirits of thunder and lightning, the tiger
ghost, the well ghost, the drowning ghost, the mouth odor ghost,
the sly ghost who hurts people surreptitiously, the pu-nung (Miao
dialect) ghost, the nai-huang (Miao dialect) ghost, the leg-
pulling ghost, the breath-obstructing ghost, the soul-bewitching

[28 cont.]

756 appease him a whole cow has to be sacrificed.

5) To rectify an injustice. If A has received injustice in
754 the hands of B and is so oppressed that he has no means of appeal,
627 he may ask a priest to present a petition in the nether world.

The priest can invoke a kind of "calamity ghost" to visit B, and if the latter is still ruthless and stubborn, this ghost can bring about death to all the members of his family, including the animals. To enlist the help of the "calamity ghost," it is necessary to give him a big crab, several river worms, a cock, and a male dog. The dog may be killed, but the cock may not be killed -- it can only be cursed to death by the priest. The crab and the river worms are put in a jar to be buried far away, [29] even in the bottom of a river, to prevent others from digging it up. It is said that in two or three days calamity is sure to befall B's family. If the latter knows about this, a priest should immediately be engaged to divine from the magic diagrams. Only when the buried items are unearthed can the calamity be averted.

761 6) To prolong life. A priest can tell whether a person's
782 life will be short-lived and he can apply for an extension for
756 him. In the process the priest has to slaughter a male pig and proceed before Yen-wang to beg for more life for the applicant. When this is granted, another pig is slaughtered to be sacrificed together with wine, glutinous rice and a carp as an expression of gratitude to Yen-wang.

787 7) To tell fortune. When someone does not know how to
756 act in times of crisis, a priest is asked to make a decision. Important matters such as choosing a trade or a profession, and trifles such as selecting materials for a garment, all require the decision of the priest, who will attempt to put the inquirer's mind in place. The average person respects the words of the priest. Sometimes when the priest decides that it will be very unlucky for a certain person to leave the village, that person may spend the rest of his life at home without going outside the village gate.

756 8) To protect children. Many families whose children
● 751 are susceptible to frequent illness would ask the priest to be their

[29 cont.]

751 "guardian" for the purpose of getting protection. This is be-
 756 cause the body of the priest is supposed to be endowed with a
 spiritual quality that can put the ghosts in their places. There-
 fore, children receiving his guardianship can avoid illness.
 Often a priest may have several hundred people under his pro-
 tection. To apply for it the protégé has to present a pair of
 shoes, a handkerchief, a cock and some glutinous rice to the
 [553] guiding spirit of the priest, after which offering the protégé
 is given a new name.

756 Priesthood among the Short-skirt Hê Miao is not a profes-
 sion, the shaman being a full-time farmer, carpenter or black-
 smith. It is only a side-line. Each time the priest performs
 some service, his remuneration consists of a few insignificant
 "lucky" items. It is said that priesthood is not a willing choice.
 Every priest has at least twenty to thirty different spirits seek-
 ing his mediumship, and if he refuses the spirits would derange
 his mind. So once seized by the spirits a man cannot help being
 a priest. He then cuts a piece of red paper into a row of human
 forms [30] and pastes them before his ancestral altar. A board
 is nailed horizontally against the wall, on which two or three tea
 cups are placed. After each magic performance, the head of
 [742] the cow, pig, or dog used in the ritual must be brought home to be
 sacrificed before the altar. But chickens and ducks used for the
 same purpose need not be brought home.

The capability of the shamans varies. Some can only
 catch small or wild ghosts but are unable to subdue big and
 fierce ghosts, who only surrender to priests with greater super-
 natural powers. Therefore, priests are divided into several
 classes. While performing magic, the priest may be assisted
 by a t'ung-shih [instructor] who is a less spiritually gifted person.
 The latter can only assist the priest but cannot engage the ghosts
 alone, and so his remuneration is still less. He may be fed
 for the services rendered without extra rewards.

[158 cont.]

361 "Méo" villages, the hygienic conditions in them are questionable
364 enough, especially during the winter when the temperature frequently "drops [159] below freezing. The "Méo" spend the days and the nights of winter squatting or sleeping about the kitchen hearth and neglect to put any extra clothing on when they go outdoors. It is clear that under these conditions the pulmonary maladies which have already been spoken of are extremely frequent and that they cause real havoc among the old people and the young children.

164 Smallpox frequently rages among the "Méo," but like all primitive people who are not poisoned by the abuse of medicines [147] for generations, they react marvelously to the simplest remedies. In 1911, a serious epidemic of smallpox ravaged a very large village in the region of Pha-Long, causing five or six deaths daily. All [751] the inhabitants were vaccinated the same day, old and young, healthy persons or those already attacked. From that moment, no further deaths occurred.

262 Maize is the basic food of the "Méo." It is boiled, steamed,
[252] or parched, or reduced to meal in order to be eaten in the form of cakes. The "Méo" also cultivate mountain rice, but like the 243 "Man," they are coming more and more to cultivate permanent irrigated rice fields, the working of which is easier and more remunerative. To this end they have taken over as much as possible of the favorable terrain, valley bottoms or sides of hillocks on which water may be brought by a simple canalization, and have laid out these areas into terraced rice fields where they often successively [249] cultivate rice and opium. (See photos 135 and 428, Plate 43, showing the rice fields after the harvest, and photo 184, Plate 41, which shows a large rice field used for the cultivation of opium, the latter photo taken March 31, 1912.)

262 Aside from maize and rice, the "Méo" eat buckwheat and many
[252] vegetables, which they cook in water with a little salt: potatoes, string beans, peas, beans, cucumbers, turnips, eggplants, pumpkins, and so on. The use of meat (fowl, game, domestic animals) is reserved for ceremonies and banquets, which the "Méo" never miss a chance for. They never eat horseflesh.

AKha A04
Miao AE5

/230 cont. /

A
515 Conditions among the Akha are somewhat more favorable, but likewise leave much to be desired. The personal cleanliness of the Akha, however, is unconditionally greater than that of the Meau. The people wash themselves regularly as soon as they are grown up; children are washed daily. The houses are always swept clean, and the Akha seem to wash their clothing /231/ more often than the Meau do. Otherwise what was found among the Meau applies. To be sure, hygienic conditions are somewhat better, but they are still so deficient that a high mortality among the children as a result of epidemics and sicknesses is unavoidable. Among the Akha, too, however, this mortality rate is offset by great fertility, so that the Akha, too, will certainly not be subject to a population decline.

A
M
164 Prophylactic measures against illness are completely unknown to both the Meau and Akha, as is the nature of infectious diseases. Although I did not succeed in determining precisely the losses caused by epidemics, the consequences of such pestilences were easily ascertained. Merely the presence of sibless Meau, who had placed themselves as unfree under the protection of powerful large /extended/ families, showed this, as did the many widows, widowers, childless parents, and orphans. Whenever I inquired about the causes of death, it was said: "Died because of the vengeance of evil spirits." It often turned out, however, that these evil spirits had killed dozens of people at the same time. I learned that once the Meau built a village in a country at an altitude lower than is customary and infested with malaria. When subsequently a malaria epidemic broke out they believed that they had chosen as a dwelling site a place haunted by evil spirits and they moved their village.

A
164 I could not find any moving of a village because of the outbreak of an epidemic among the Akha. Southwest of the Doy Tung there was an Akha village whose inhabitants had almost all fallen victim to an epidemic; from the description it was probably cholera. The survivors, however, had not moved the village.